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# A Note to Agents on

## Clean Clothes

PA- 843 • Division of Home Economics • Federal Extension Service • U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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These five pamphlets on Clean Clothes are designed to teach low-income homemakers:

- Why clothes should be sorted before they are washed and how to do it.
- How water hardness and water temperature affect the way clothes wash.
- The differences between water softeners and fabric softeners—what they do and how to use them.
- How to choose a soap or detergent and how to use it.
- What bleaches do, how to choose the right kind, and how to use them; how to choose and use disinfectants.
- How to make ironing easier.

You can use these leaflets with individual homemakers or with small groups. However, as with all these low-literate teaching materials, they should be used only to reinforce a demonstrated lesson and not be handed out for self-study. Use those that fit your program needs.

### ADAPT THE MATERIAL

Since they are intended for nationwide use, these pamphlets are written in rather general terms. You will want to adapt them to your local conditions and the needs of the families you serve. This is especially true of *The Water You Use*. Check with your Extension agricultural engineers for help.

You will also have to adapt your teaching plan to the kinds of laundry equipment these families use. Some may have their own washing machines; others may depend on coin-operated machines or wash by hand. Your program aides probably will not be familiar with all of the methods and equipment they may encounter. They may need special training before they can show other homemakers how to cope with problems they haven't faced themselves.

The lesson on *Getting Ready to Wash* may present special problems. Low-income families using coin-operated machines may not feel able to afford the extra money needed to wash white and colored or heavily soiled clothes separately when everything would fit in one load. In hard water areas, they may also feel they cannot afford the extra cost of water conditioners. In such cases, you may have to present figures on the hidden costs of shortened fabric life and reduced garment attractiveness to gain and keep their attention.

## FURTHER REFERENCES

In addition to the many excellent sources of information on laundering you now use, you may want to check USDA's Home and Garden Bulletin No. 101, *Home Laundering: the equipment and the job*, and the 1965 Yearbook of Agriculture, *Consumers All*.

This "Clean Clothes" series was adapted from materials originally developed by Ethel W. Self, Specialist in Home Management, Kansas Co-operative Extension Service.